



# Hoosier National Forest Highlights



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## Dispersed Camping on the Hoosier National Forest

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Did you know there are many opportunities for camping on the Hoosier National Forest besides at a developed campground? For those of you who enjoy a more primitive camping experience than offered in our campgrounds (Hardin Ridge, Tipsaw Lake, and Indian-Celina) you may want to give dispersed camping a try. Dispersed or roadside camping is available in many locations on the 202,834 acre Hoosier National Forest. There are many established campsites along roads throughout the Forest where no fee is required to camp. These sites do not offer amenities such as water or toilets, but many have existing rock fire rings.

These sites have recently been assessed and many have had the driveways hardened with additional gravel to make them more accessible by vehicles and to reduce resource damage. Barrier posts have been installed to identify the size limits of the sites. This effort was in response to on-going resource damage occurring at some of the sites. Over time, the footprint of many of these sites was continuing to grow in size, resulting in significant resource damage such as erosion, trash dumping, trampling of vegetation, and creation of user-developed trails. During the summer of 2010, 50 of these dispersed recreation sites across the Forest were identified as needing some level of definition regarding limits of the sites.



Funded by money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), college students worked on this project. Crews of 3-6 students worked to install barrier posts to limit further increase in the size of dispersed sites. Also, work is

currently underway to lay gravel at a number of the dispersed sites to provide a hardened parking area.

If you plan to camp at a dispersed site on the Hoosier National Forest in the future, please remember these general rules:

- Use is restricted to already established locations. You may not drive off road to create a new camping area.
- Your camping equipment or vehicle must not block trails, roads or gates. Roadside camping and parking is prohibited along Tower Ridge Road through the Charles C. Deam Wilderness.
- Pack your trash back home and leave the site like you would like to find it. Garbage service is not provided at dispersed campsites. Trash dumping on the forest is illegal and violation can result in steep penalties.
- The use of vehicles off road is prohibited on the Hoosier National Forest. Motorized dispersed camping is prohibited off designated routes displayed on the Forest Motorized Vehicle Use Map (available online at [www.fs.fed.us/r9/hoosier/maps](http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/hoosier/maps)).
- Campers may stay up to 14 consecutive days within a 21-day period. Campers may not stay on the Forest in excess of 30 days in a calendar year.
- Camping is not allowed at trailheads or within 300 feet of trailheads. Camping is allowed at Hemlock Cliffs and Buzzard's Roost, within designated horse camps, and designated recreation areas.
- Bringing un-certified firewood onto the forest is prohibited due to the Emerald Ash Borer. Pine and kiln dried firewood is still acceptable in addition to USDA or IDNR certified firewood. For a list of vendors selling certified firewood, please visit our website at [www.fs.fed.us/r9/hoosier](http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/hoosier) and click on General Information and again on Emerald Ash Borer.
- Always check for current restrictions, such as fire bans, prior to heading out to the Forest. Be aware of current hunting seasons and the presence of hunters in the area you are visiting.
- Practice Leave No Trace Principles when dispersed camping. To learn about these Leave No Trace and these principals, please visit [www.lnt.org/programs/principles](http://www.lnt.org/programs/principles) .

Dispersed camping on the forest can be a fun, affordable, and enjoyable activity

for the entire family as long as these few simple rules are followed. Fall is a great time to experience the forest, so get out there and camp!

For more information on the dispersed recreation program contact Vicki Gullang-Harris at 812-276-4721 or by email at [vgullang@fs.fed.us](mailto:vgullang@fs.fed.us).

